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AN EPISTLE TO FRIENDS.

For the ſtirring up ſuch as are Negligent in Attending their Meetings Appointed for the Worſhip of God; ſhewing the Danger thereof, and earneſtly Exhorting them to Diligence for the future.

Heb. x. 25. *Not forſaking the aſſembling of our ſelves together, as the manner of ſome is; but exhorting one another: and ſo much the more as ye ſee the Day approaching.*

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BRITISH
MUSEUM

AN Epiſtle to *FRIENDS.*

Dear Friends,

IN the Love of CHRIST, our Holy Head, and High-Prieſt, I dearly Salute you; greatly deſiring your Growth and Proſperity in that Living and Eternal Truth, which God in Mercy hath bleſs'd us with the Knowledge of, and hath reveal'd in the inward parts; in which, Peace and Acceptance with him is known, and the Bleſſings and Promiſes of God our Father are enjoy'd.

In this bleſſed Truth I greatly deſire that your Growth, Proſperity, and Zeal for God, and his Worſhip and Service, may encreaſe; and your Godly Care may be to Maintain your Chriſtian Teſtimony in all reſpects, that there may not be any want thereof, or failure in any of you.

Eſpecially, in your diligent Meeting together *at your appointed Times*, on other Days, beſides the Firſt Day of the Week, to wait upon Almighty God, and to Worſhip and Serve him, in the Spirit of his dear Son, our Lord; through whom,

from God the Father, we receive all the Mercies, Bleſſings and Comforts we are made Partakers of.

And as we diligently Meet in his Name, and wait upon God in the Exerciſe of his Holy Spirit which he hath ſent forth into our Hearts, we have you know (I doubt not, by good Experience) met with living Encouragement, by witneſſing the Promiſe of Chriſt to be fulfilled, who ſaid, *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midſt of them*, Matth. 18. 20.

And when you have known him, our great Miniſter, and holy High-Prieſt in the midſt, then, oh then! although you have not had any of his Miniſters amongſt you, or a Verbal Teſtimony bore for him, to ſtir up your pure Minds by way of Remembrance, yet he by his Spirit, hath reveal'd the Secrets of your Hearts, and open'd your States and Conditions; and let you ſee the need and want you had of him, and by his Spirit begat living Supplications in your Souls to God, and by that maketh Interceſſion for you, according to the Will of God; and then Anſwer'd them, by Adminiſtring unto you out of his fulneſs, a ſuitable ſupply to your States and Wants; and alſo raiſed holy Praiſes and Thankſgivings unto God for his great Love and Mercy, and giving you a re-

newed ſenſe of his Goodneſs, that you have been made to ſay in your Hearts, *It's not in vain to wait upon the Lord, for his goodneſs endureth for ever.*

Oh! therefore dear Friends, neglect not this Chriſtian Duty of Meeting together; for you may remember, how greatly and deeply many of our Friends and Brethren have ſuffer'd, by Spoil of their Goods, Impriſonments of their Bodies, even unto Death, and ſome by Baniſhment from their Native Country, and from their tender Wives, Children, and near Relations, becauſe they were Conſcienciouſly and Zealouſly concern'd, diligently to Meet together at their **appointed** Times, only to Worſhip God in Spirit and Truth: And dared not, whatever they ſuffer'd, forſake the Aſſembling of themſelves together, as the manner of ſome is; but in faithfulneſs Diſcharge their Duty, as I pray God we all may.

Let not therefore, I tenderly beſeech you in Brotherly Love, any thing cauſe you to decline your faithful Diſcharge of this Duty, now in this time of outward Eaſe and Liberty: But be zealous and diligent to meet together in the Name and Fear of God, (to wait upon him) in your Meetings, you have therein **agreed** to ſettle, while you have

Health and Ability, that you may know your Strength in the Lord to be renewed, and that your Zeal for his Service may not abate, but increaſe; and a right Improvement may be made of thoſe Opportunities whilſt we peaceably injoy them, leaſt we provoke the Lord, by neglecting our Duty therein, to deprive us of ſuch Seaſons, but alſo of Health and Comfort from him, when we come upon a Bed of Sickneſs, or at the Hour of Death, when Peace and Comfort from him, will be more acceptable than all things in this periſhing World.

And let all ſeriouſly conſider, that in the time of Health and Liberty, if any careleſly neglect to meet with his People, and to wait upon him; how can they expect Peace, Comfort, or Acceptance with him at ſuch a time? or how are they prepared to give an Account to him, who will bring every Work to Judgment, with every ſecret Thing? or can any expect that he'll ſay to them hereafter, *well done*, that have neglected what they ought to have done? or that he ſhould call them *good and Faithful Servants*, that have not been *ſo*, nor performed their Agreements by meeting together at the times, he by his Spirit hath led them to *appoint*, to *wait upon* and *worſhip* and *ſerve* Him: Will he, can any think, invite them to

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enter into the *Joy of the Lord*, or eſteem them *his faithful Servants*; ſurely, *nay*.

I therefore, *dear Friends*, in Bowels of Love tenderly exhort you: Be ſtir'd up unto more Diligence, to obſerve and keep up your *Week-day Meetings*, and let not any think it's ſufficient to meet on the Firſt Day of the Week, and other Days *only* when they expect ſome Teſtimony may be born among them by ſome Miniſter or Servant of Chriſt; for certainly, whether any Teſtimony be ſo bore or not, it's our Duty to *meet* and *wait* on God, as aforeſaid: And as all are Diligent therein, and Faithful unto the Lord, (as he hath many) he may by his Word and Power, fit, fill, and conſtrain many of you in Love, to declare his Goodneſs, and tell what the Lord hath done for your Souls, and make you Inſtrumental in his Hand, to gather others to the Knowledge of his Truth, and alſo to Build up one another in the Holy Faith, and to provoke one another to Love and Good Works, and to a diligent Perſeverance in the Lord's Service, that whenever the Lord ſhall take you hence, you may be prepared to appear before God with Boldneſs, and give your Account to him with *Joy*, and have the Commendation of *Good and Faithful Servant*, and may enter *into the Joy of the Lord*; which

thoſe that do not improve their Talent, but neglect their Duty of *meeting together*, and decline in their Love and Service unto Almighty God, will certainly miſs of if they mend not.

Oh! then, what will all we have *Profeſs'd* or *Poſſeſs'd*, *known* or *done* in times paſt, avail us: Surely ſuch Negligent Ones will have no ground to expect any other Reward, but that the unfaithful Servant had.

Be therefore *Zealous*, and *Repent* of your Neglect; Amend and with Diligence meet together, and wait on God in his Spirit, that you may know it to help you, to pray to him as you ought, that your Love and Zeal for his Name and Service may be increaſed, and that his Peace, which paſſeth all the Underſtanding of Man, you may have and know, to keep your Hearts and Minds through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. And that the Bleſſing of God, that maketh Rich and addeth no Sorrow with it, may be upon you, without which whatever we have or do enjoy, or may ſeek to get in this World, will be no laſting Benefit or Comfort to us.

Let not therefore the Cares of this World, the Deceitfulneſs of Riches, or eager Purſuit after them, or the Love of other things prevail on any, to draw them from their Duty unto God, or into a careleſs Neglect in meeting together to wait

on him, to perform our Reaſonable Service that we owe him, who is the Great and Sovereign Lord of the whole Earth, the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh, whom we all ought to Love, Honour, Fear, Serve, and faithfully Obey whilſt we have time and Breath in this World, if we would enjoy Eternal Life with him in the World to come.

Which, that you all may, is my hearty Deſire and fervent Prayer unto Almighty God, as for my ſelf; who am thus concern'd to write in Zeal for God and his Service, and in true Love to all that make Profeſſion of his Name and Truth, and his Spiritual Worſhip therein; and who know all our Chriſtian Meetings are to be held in his Name; and that thoſe Gatherings that are not in his Name, are *dead* and *formal*, becauſe the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the laſt *Adam*, being made unto us a Quickning Spirit, is not in the midſt of them; as by ſorrowful Experience we have found when we were in thoſe Gatherings; But the Lord in Mercy hath viſited and gather'd us to his *Shiloe*, to the Prince of Life and Peace, and given us to believe in him, as God in Love hath ſent him a Light into the World, and we have known through his Light, that hath ſhined into our Hearts, that he hath given unto us *the Light of the Know-*

Knowledge of his Glory in the Face of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Oh! therefore, let us that are ſo mercifully Viſited and highly Favour'd of the Lord, be zealous and faithful in keeping our Meetings to wait upon and ſerve him, who hath been ſo good to us, as to gather us out of the *dead Forms*, and *empty Profeſſions*, and *lifeleſs Gatherings* that are in the World, (that lies in Wickedneſs) unto himſelf the Fountain of Living Mercies, the God of all Comfort and Conſolation, that we by faithful ſerving of him in his Spirit, may (to our Souls) gain great Satisfaction, and be made Pertakers of the Comforts of his Spirit, and of the Joy of his Salvation; which is an Everlaſting and Eternal Salvation, and we ſhall Experience it to be ſo, if we obey and walk in his Light, which we Profeſs; which, that we all may, is my Earneſt Deſire.

And as this hath open'd in me in Love, I deſire it may be ſo received by all; and then I am ſure they will have ſome Benefit, and I Comfort:

Who am your Friend and Brother, that Travels for the Proſperity of Sion, *that ſhe may be an Eternal Excellency, a Joy of many Generations,*

Kenſington, *the 9th of the 6th Mo.* 1710. J. F.

To

To the Young Convinced.

SOmething in true Love hath farther opened in my Mind to write to you, that are of late Convinced of the bleſſed Truth (as it is profeſſed by the People called *Quakers*) and that have receiv'd it in the Love thereof; and I doubt not but you have often met with Comfort in their Aſſemblies, and had your Hearts warmed, and your Zeal and Love for the Name and Truth of God hath encreaſed, ſo that your delight is to meet with them, as often as you have Opportunity. To you therefore it needs not now be ſaid, Be diligent to meet at the **Appointed** Times, becauſe you delight ſo to do, and often have bleſſed Openings therein, and Sights given you of Heavenly Things, by the Light of the Holy Truth; and have been taken up as into *Piſgah, and had the Viſion of the good Land, and holy City, where there is no need of the Light of the Sun, neither of the Moon, for the Lord God and the Lamb is the Light thereof, and the Glory of God doth enlighten it.*

And you have ſeen the narrow Way, that leads to the ſtrait Gate, through which an Entrance is into Eternal Life; and this is Comfortable unto you, and is for your Encouragement to go forward, and that you may not decline your Duty

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in meeting and waiting upon the Lord. But here you are not to reſt ſatisfied, that is, in the Sight and Viſion of Heavenly Things, but humbly and diligently to wait upon the Lord in his Light, wherein you have had theſe Sights, to know your Strength renewed, that you may be enabled to perſevere in the way of God, and in faithfulneſs to follow the Lord in the way of Self-denial, and the daily Croſs, and to know your Wills ſubjected, and the Fleſh with its Affections and Luſts Crucified. For Chriſt ſaid, *If any Man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his Croſs and follow me.* Mind, he Exhorts to *Practice*, (as taking up the Croſs is) which that his Diſciples and Scholars may be found in, he Exhorts them to that Practice; which is far beyond *Viſion*, *Sight*, or *Profeſſion*, without it.

Therefore, dear and tender Friends, be heartily Concerned in and out of Meetins to wait on God, and live in that fear, that teacheth to hate the Evil way, that you may be taught to walk in *his* way, and to Pray to him in his Holy Spirit for what, by the Light of it in your ſelves, he ſhews you want; and then the Lord will hear, and Anſwer you, and give you Power to Practice that good you know and profeſs; which

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as you continue in it unto the End, you will have Peace and Glory.

Do not therefore ſettle down in a ſatiſfaction that you know the Truth and Way of God, and have had openings of Heavenly Things, tho' there is a Comfort in that, becauſe you were once without the knowledge thereof.

But you are now to continue diligent in attending upon the Lord, to have an inward and Experimental Knowledge of the work of Righteouſneſs, and of Peace, that you may have aſſurance thereof for evermore: And you muſt, as you are come to believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, know by his Spirit and Power a being Baptized into his Name; and by the one Spirit, into that one Body, of which the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the Head; and Experience a drinking into that Spirit, that you may come to live and walk in it, and be lead by it, in the way of God you have had a ſight of, and into all Truth. For as God hath bleſſed you with the knowledge of his Truth, and inclined you to receive it in the Love thereof, ſo now you are to be careful to walk in it; for it's in it, Peace and Acceptance with God is known, and in the Spirit and Truth that he is worſhipped, and muſt be call'd upon; and it's by it, all his Diſciples according to his Promiſe are lead into all Truth; and all by his Light and Truth muſt be lead, if ever they would

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come unto God's holy Hill and Tabernacle, the place where his Honour dwells.

And it's in his Light you muſt walk, if you'll be Saved; the Convincement and Profeſſion of it, otherwiſe will not do.

Oh! Friends, conſider this, and remember what he ſaid, who we call Lord and Maſter: *No Man can ſerve two Maſters, nor can we ſerve God and Mammon.* Let all therefore be diligent and careful to avoid thoſe Cares of the World, that choak the good Seed, and to keep Chriſt's Commands, that they may know his Doctrine, and abide in his Love, and faithfully maintain your Teſtimony for him in all reſpects.

Then whatever Trouble, Exerciſe, Tribulations or Afflictions you may meet with in this World (as there is a living in the Truth) ye will be ſupported under them, and know them ſanctified to you, and you through them (by the Truth) unto the Lord.

And beware, as Chriſt ſaid to his Diſciples, *of falſe Prophets, tho' they come in ſheeps cloathing, you'll know them by their fruit*; and you'll ſee by the Light of Truth, it's your Intereſt and Duty to beware of ſuch. And Friends, whilſt you have Strength and Liberty, continue faithful and diligent in meeting together to wait upon the Lord; and to obſerve what Chriſt our Lord ſaid unto his Diſciples, yea unto all, *Watch and Pray, that you enter not into Temptation.* Tho' you may be Tempted with the Glory

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of the World, or the love of it, or to the vain fashions and customs that are in it, or to any thing that would cool your Love, abate your Zeal, or cause you to decline your Obedience unto God, and from your faithful following of him unto Death; which to effect, is the great design of Satan, by his many subtil wiles, that so he may (notwithstanding you have been convinced of Truth, and receiv'd it in the love thereof) draw you from your faithfulness thereto, unto Death, and so deprive you of the Crown of Life, and from entring into the Holy Land or City you have had a sight of, and for some time been Travelling towards, as the *Israelites* of old, that were brought out of outward *Egypt*, so you have out of the Spiritual, and as they were Travelling towards the outward *Canaan*, so you are towards the Heavenly; but as they who were drawn into Disobedience and Unfaithfulness did not enter, no more will you, if you are disobedient, and depart from the Faith, by which you may be kept as the Primitive Christians were.

I shall also remind you in Love, of the Caution given to the Believers of Old, and quickly Conclude. *Take heed Brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God*; and renew the Exhortation given by the same Author, esteeming it greatly necessary to be followed by us in all our Meetings, and out

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of them, *viz. Let us draw near* [*i. e.* to God] *with a true heart, in full aſſurance of Faith, having our Heart ſprinkled from an evil Conſcience, and our Bodies waſhed with pure water; let us hold faſt the profeſſion of our Faith without wavering (for he is Faithful that hath promiſed.)* And let us conſider one another, to provoke unto Love and good Works; not forſaking the Aſſembling of our ſelves together, as the manner of ſome is, but Exhorting one another; and ſo much the more, as ye ſee the Day approaching (either of *Exerciſe* or *Death*) that we may be fitted for *either*; ſo that we may patiently endure the one, and be comforted in both; and at laſt enter into that Reſt and Kingdom, that is prepared for the People of God, that live Righteouſly here, for they ſhall live happily therein hereafter, for ever more.

Which, that you, and all that have began well, even in the Spirit, and known Comfort in it, and have thereby been guided in the way (the *Truth*) that moſt *certainly* leads to God; and that ye may be preſerved therein unto the End, that Crowns all, is the ſincere Deſire, and fervent Prayer of him, who is your Fellow-Traveller, that deſires to endure to the End; and in Love to Truth, and you all; remains your Friend,

John Feild.

FINIS.